

Remarks/Arguments:

The amendments in this response are made to the claims as examined in the Office Action made Final dated June 22, 2006. Amendments herein are made to place the application in condition for allowance, and as such, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application. Claims 1, 5, 6, 8 – 10 and 12 - 16 are pending. Claims 1, 5, 6, 8 – 10 and 12 - 16 stand rejected at present. Claims 12 - 14, were previously withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1 and 15 are amended herein.

The specification was objected to as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for claim 15 as previously presented. Claim 15 is amended herein to overcome this objection.

Claims 1, 5, 10 and 15 were rejected under 35 U. S. C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Cantu et al. in U.S. Patent 4,986,354. Independent claim 1 has been amended herein, and claims 5, 10, and 15 depend upon claim 1. Applicants note that Cantu '354 discloses borate crosslinkers encapsulated within microcapsules where the microcapsules are formed from the low molecular weight condensation product of hydroxyacetic (glycolic) acid with itself, or with other compounds, such as lactic acid. Cantu '354 fails to disclose physically mixing two separate particles, the first being a solid acid-precursor and the second, a solid acid-reactive material. Rather, Cantu '354 requires that the condensed acid encapsulate a chemical to form one solid capsule. As such, Cantu '354 fails to anticipate Applicant's claim since Cantu does not disclose all elements of, and as arranged in, Applicant's claims.

Claims 6 and 16 were rejected under 35 U. S. C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cantu et al. in U.S. Patent 4,986,354. Independent claim 1 has been amended herein, and claims 6 and 16 depend thereon. Modifying Cantu '354 to achieve the invention as claimed herein would cause the invention of Cantu '354 to become inoperable or destroys its intended function, since the chemical would not be encapsulated with the condensed acid encapsulant, and thus the release would not be delayed, as intended. Therefore, Applicant's claimed invention is non-obvious, and Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

Claims 8 and 9 were rejected under 35 U. S. C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cantu et al. in U.S. Patent 4,986,354 in view of Johnson et al. (5,325,921). Claims 8 and 9 depend upon amended claim 1. To the extent that the examiner maintains the rejection, Applicants respectfully traverse. Combining the teachings of Cantu '354 with those of Johnson '921 would not result in the invention as now claimed by the Applicants. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

In light of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If the Examiner believes that the prosecution of the application would be facilitated by a telephone interview, Applicants invite the Examiner to contact the undersigned at 281-285-8606. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional required fee, or credit any excess fee paid, to Deposit Account 04-1579 (56.0758).

Respectfully submitted,



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